

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME
DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES
NEWS RELEASE



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SUBDISTRICTS 2 AND 3 COMMERCIAL SALMON REOPENS FOR 48-HOURS

Subdistricts 2 and 3, the Golovin and Elim Subdistricts will reopen for one 48-hour commercial salmon opening from 6:00 p.m. Wednesday, August 14 to 6:00 p.m. Friday, August 16. Commercial permit holders in both subdistricts are limited to 100 fathoms of net and gillnets must have a mesh size of 6 inches or less.

Five Golovin permit holders caught 940 coho salmon during the recent 36-hour fishing period that ended midnight Monday evening, August 12. The catch was 112% above the average catch of 442 coho salmon and the CPUE was 135% above the average CPUE for the second week of August. Additionally, the 4,132 coho salmon harvested this season ranks third best ever and this season's harvest is now on a record-setting pace.

Fifteen Elim permit holders caught 734 coho salmon during the recent 36-hour fishing period that ended Monday night. The catch was 12% below the mid-August average and CPUE was 34% below the historical mid-August average. The total harvest of 2,800 coho salmon this season is average for this date.

The coho salmon escapement at Kwiniuk River counting tower in Elim Subdistrict is below average for the second week of August. However, projections of coho salmon escapement based on current tower counts range from 3,500–9,000 cohos. This level of inriver abundance has been shown in the past to easily provide for subsistence uses and enough fish to reach the Kwiniuk River aerial survey goal of 650–1,300 fish.

There is no longer an escapement counting project at Niukluk River in the Golovin Subdistrict. However, 630 coho salmon were counted in the Niukluk River from Ophir Creek downstream to the Fish River confluence during an August 13 aerial survey conducted by department personnel under fair to poor viewing conditions. These early survey results suggest that coho salmon escapement will be achieved as the old aerial survey goal of 950–1,900 coho salmon correlated well with the tower-based goal of 2,400–7,200 coho salmon. The survey count of 630 fish is also considered to be very conservative because of the difficult viewing conditions. To ensure that escapement and subsistence needs of coho salmon are met, the department may need to reduce commercial fishing opportunity in Golovin Subdistrict if catch statistics drop below historical average catch statistics during this opening.